

THEY PLANTED BEACH GRASS IN THE 1800'S

There is a passage in Justin Winsor's *A History Of The Town Of Duxbury* (published in 1849) which shows that concern over the ravages of the sea was felt a century ago, and not without reason:

"Fears have been entertained, in times past, that at some time the sea might force its way through the beach at various places, and to guard against this, there was built, some years ago, with much labor and expense, at many points throughout its whole extent, a kind of seawall, placed for the greatest part on the inner side of the beach, and formed by a double line of fences, made by stakes driven in the ground, and seaweed thrown between. This was accomplished and paid for by an appropriation of Congress, amounting to several thousand dollars, and a large number of men were there employed for 3 or 4 weeks. At this time an appropriation was made by the town, and the whole extent of the beach purchased, and is now the town's property.

"One of the best methods of preventing the destruction of the beach, is to attend to the preservation of the beach grass. Several times the seed has been sown at different points, and even as early as 1751 the town took measures to prevent the grass being eaten by cattle. At a town meeting this year, on the 20th of May, they voted 'to petition the General Court to get an act to prevent neat cattle going upon or feeding on Duxbury Beach for the future.'"

MEMORIES

Here are some childhood memories of a reader who wishes to remain anonymous:

On the way to the Point School we usually crossed the ice on Blue Fish River, which was more fun than going over the bridge. Captain Parker Hall's schooner was usually in for the winter, and he made sure we reached the other side.

At school, teacher tapped on the window with her wedding ring to call us. I recall that on winter days there were one or 2 apples on the stove to create a nice aroma. Teacher kept teats in the drawer for babyish pupils, and another punishment was a spanking with a ruler. But there were times when teacher held us on her lap and fed us chocolates which she always seemed to have.

As a girl I remember going to Peterson's Drug Store for anticolic nipples and Walker-Gordon bottles. I remember, too, that it was our job to rush to the fire station and ring the bell when a

call came that there was a fire.

Across the bridge was Tony's Barber Shop, where the men gathered evenings to settle town and national affairs. We always waited for Papa to get there, then walked in and asked for favors. We felt sure he would be in a good mood and wouldn't refuse in front of his cronies. But how well I remember the morning his mood was something less than good!

On this particular morning the coffee was boiling as usual, and Papa took his usual sip. "What in hell!" he bellowed. "What's this stuff? This is the third attempt on my life. You'll kill me vet!"

Seems that the enamel coffee pot had been soaking all night with a solution of Sal-soda and water.

That's how it was in Duxbury in the good old days.

PHOTOGRAPHY

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